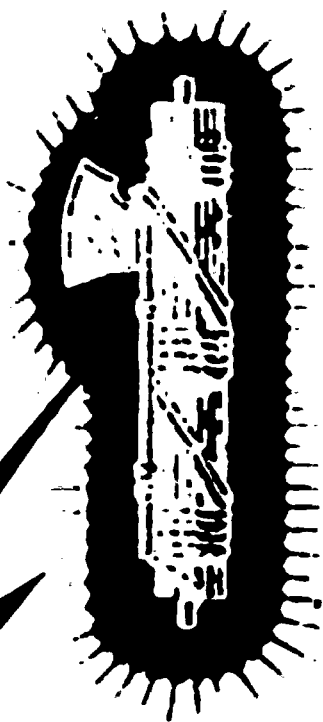


***CREED OF A
FASCIST
REVOLUTIONARY***



BY A.K. CHESTERTON



Creed of a Fascist Revolutionary

1. Perils of Tolerance.

The people of Britain are not adepts in the use of anger.

That is why our politicians sleep so peacefully at nights, and why no nocturnal terrors hover around the pillows of our Press magnates, or disturb the beatific slumbers of our money-jugglers. The indignation which melts before newspaper blandishments or is conveniently side-tracked by newspaper lies, is not the kind to draw tumbrils through the street in the glow of a blood-red sunset.

It is argued that the defects which make Britons mighty poor revolutionaries represent sterling qualities in the national character—for instance, what the Ostrer newspaper calls “the splendid spectacle of Britain’s sanity” boils down to this apparent incapacity for anger.

Realists who use such terms are at once suspect. They know that a race of men who good-humouredly suffer their national life to wear the aspect of a gigantic charade, while every kind of financial rampage and political chicanery operates to their disadvantage behind the scenes, cannot by any stretch of the imagination be accounted sane. When such people congratulate us upon our sanity, therefore, what they are really doing is congratulating themselves upon their lack of intimate acquaintance with our lamp-posts.

The peril of our peoples lies in this very toleration

in which they are taught to take so large a pride. That we are a temperate people is not to our discredit, except that everywhere our mildness is exploited. That our spirits seek peace is not an indictment against us, except that everywhere our tranquillity provides soil for the cultivation of overlords who are blood-cousins to the maggot and the leech.

There is no hope of national salvation until Britons learn to look through their boasted virtue of tolerance and bring forth anger as a sword to clear away the foulness which that same tolerance has bred.

Societies are far gone in depravity when toleration is considered good in itself, without regard to the thing tolerated.

In the chaotic medley of democratic ideas toleration is confounded with humanitarianism. But for this confusion, so assiduously fostered, our modern commercial civilisation could scarcely have survived its birth. Never in human annals has the law of tooth and fang been exercised with such savage intensity as during the last hundred years, yet throughout the whole of this time the people of Britain have preened themselves upon living in a land "where freedom broadens slowly down from precedent to precedent," and believed that in tolerating the most monstrous and palpable evils they were serving either the will of God or else that stranger and more mysterious deity whom they called Evolution—in either case, that they were acting as sage men and women in the interests of mankind. Had they been told that their attitude was not humanitarian but the negation of every human value, they would have been surprised and pained, but quite incredulous.

Let results judge the issue. While reform and mitigation of a few of the grosser evils have made some advance, fighting every inch of the way, their progress is illimitably less than that of the organised quackery and plunder which called forth the rage of Carlyle a century ago, and which to-day would leave him speechless and swooning.

Fascism comes upon the scene to insist that anger, so far from being akin to madness and the peculiar vice of the barbarian, is indispensable to the ordered progress of mankind. Tempered and disciplined it becomes perhaps the chief of all the social virtues which shall redeem the world.

Not that the streets of Merrie England shall flow red with blood ; not that heads will roll in the sand. The Fascist revolutionary refuses to regard the lives of the quacks and jugglers as sufficiently valuable to destroy. What shall be destroyed is the toleration which is their breeding ground, together with the political and economic systems which they have shaped so deftly to their heart's desire.

Thereafter every attempt to reintroduce a debased materialism and a standard of commercial and political morality that would disgrace the beasts of the field, will meet not with the stupefied complaisance of a doped and stupefied race, but with a cold, relentless anger standing sentinel at the threshold of life's abiding decencies.

Then, indeed, shall there be witnessed "the splendid spectacle of Britain's sanity," though doubtless the premises of the Ostrer Press will not be festooned in honour of the day.

2. The Fight Against Decay.

The patience of the British people in the endurance of wrongs, representing one of Democracy's most forlorn triumphs, achieves nowhere a larger sovereignty than among the mass of people at any rate nominally in revolt against the organised injustice of the existing economic system.

"They also serve who only stand and wait," an admirable motto for Conservatism, could be blazoned with equal veracity upon the Red Flag, since most of those who should be storming the barricades of our economic system, in the role of honest revolutionaries have been so anæsthetised by the prevailing philosophy of the last century that they volunteer no further than to act as the patrons of evolution, aspiring to watch the barricades perish of their own accord.

That is what they call the "Inevitability of Gradualness," and in one important respect they are quite right—the present economic system is indeed falling into ruin. Only it so happens that the same process, at the same time and at a vastly accelerated pace, is overtaking the entire nation.

While these inert "Progressives" fiddle and temporise and fight their sham battles in and out of Parliament, Great Britain—once so proud and virile and majestic—crumbles into dissolution, her foundations eaten away by financial and commercial lust, her superstructure shaken by political ineptitude, cowardice and graft, her morale destroyed by the spiritual discords of the class-war, and her ancient grandeur assailed by all the forces of decay which appear when there is no anti-toxin of courageous and

constructive effort to keep the people in a state of exercise and health.

Nothing is easier than to postulate an ideal state and then to assume that Providence, sharing the same vision, is working with slow precision and infinite wisdom for its attainment. Nothing is easier—and nothing more disastrous.

The Generations of the Lost, from their vantage points at the street corners, watch in vain for the vision to materialise, and after the hopeless years have drifted past there dawns a day when it is apparent to all that the brave new world is not come, but that the bad old world has grown worse and that what was once a great and wealthy empire is sunk to the proportions of a vassal state, poverty stricken, weak and stinking of corruption and the grave.

Thus there is no trust to be placed either in those who would conserve a bad and tottering system or in those who rejoice to see the system totter and are careless of the simultaneous destruction of a superb race of men.

These are perilous days for the nation, whose deep-seated maladies cannot be cured by the fake medicines of the politicians, but only by the drastic surgery of a Fascist revolution.

The price to be paid for the revolution entails the sacrifice of many cherished illusions, not least among them the smug notion that progress is inherent in the social scheme of things.

We have to face a truth which to many will not be a pleasant truth—that the social tendency is always in the direction of disintegration. Here is cold comfort for reformers who leave their work to the

processes of time. Yet real men, so far from being dismayed, will read into this ordinance all the more need for the development of spiritual "muscle," knowing that the future of civilisation rests entirely with them and with the splendour of their courage.

Can human endeavour avail to save our nation from decline, and forge for it the revolution which will ensure that it enjoys a more abundant life in the years to come? That is the question which Providence hurls at our head, and Fascism alone is ready with an answer. The Blackshirt legions march through the street in answer to the challenge.

The Blackshirts have heard the "tap, tap, tap" of the National Death-Watch Beetle, and never again are they fated to rest in peace. Henceforward they serve as the soldiers of Britain's civic life, warring eternally against all the disruptive factors which conspire to bring this nation to its doom.

There is no other way, no other hope. The fashioners of the eternal compromise have done their best—or worst. No further excuse awaits them, and they must now give place to the zealot who will sacrifice everything for his cause.

The civilisation of the future will not be served by the conjurer and the *flaneur*, but by men and women in a white-heat of sincerity: men and women who will build up their corporate life with sweat and agony of labour, and interpret that building up as the cardinal purpose of their lives.

Their work never at any stage will be easy, least of all in these days of the revolution which they plan. Confronting them is not only the conservatism of those who defend the present, but even more the

conservatism of those who profess to rebel against it. As a gigantic fake has been perpetrated upon the people of Britain for a hundred years, so now are half of them in the throes of a fake rebellion. Will disillusionment come in time ?

3. Political Betrayal.

The betrayal of the electorate by men who break their pledges and serve interests other than those committed to their care is a commonplace of our present political life. Parliamentary cynicism, and the "rackets" concealed beneath its surface, are all on the side of the betrayers, as indeed is the entire social conspiracy. Perfidy is now accepted as a matter of routine.

Those who achieved power by promising to end this disgrace have proved themselves no more reliable than those they sought to supplant. Theirs is very nearly the miracle of having their bun and eating it, in that they are still hailed as the reformers destined to usher in the new world, no matter how tenaciously they cling to the very considerable prizes that the old world has to offer them.

Small wonder that men so deeply compromised should keep their revolutionary creeds in cold storage and never trot them forth except where there is not the slightest risk to the maintenance of the *status quo*.

It is conceivable that the more honest among these demagogues drug their consciences with the belief that the weary masses who toiled for their triumph are content that such remarkable men should represent them, without asking for the advancement of the policies which they planned. There are human

beings as we know only too well, who are incapable of picturing any desirable objective beyond their own investiture with the reins of control. Democracy, admiring such unconquerable vanity, always seeks out these men to be her Prime Ministers.

At any rate, our politicians are wise to make their hay while the sun of popular stupidity shines upon them, for the day rapidly approaches when the Fascist Revolution will bring their activities to an end.

It is still possible for them to delude themselves that they have nothing to lose but their seats, and even that issue, according to immemorial custom, will not depend upon the merits of the case. Their electors are never likely to peep into Hansard, far less into the documents which are not published for all the world to read.

On the face of it they have every reason to suppose that as it has been in the past, so it will be in the future, that the one business which it is safe to mismanage is the national business, and the one interest which it is safe to misrepresent is the national interest.

Nevertheless, those of them with ears closest to the ground evidently distrust their present security, and not without cause.

They know that a retributive justice is preparing to weigh in the balance their achievements with their promises. They know that the Blackshirt march to power bears high the scales, and with the scales, the scaffold for many a political reputation.

Thus the frantic effort to smash our Fascist cause. The politicians will not lightly abandon this effort, so dearly do they prize their present liberty.

The highest positions, however, should carry the largest responsibilities, and only by calling to account those who hold great office can responsible government become anything more than a figment in the democratic dream. That is why Fascism will introduce into popular representation a new element. It will no longer be safe to refuse a square deal to the electorate.

Obtaining votes by false pretences, for example, will be considered no less criminal than large-scale stealing, and the man who abuses his position as a trustee of the nation by misleading the electors, advancing a sectional interest at the expense of the national interest, or furthering his own self-interest in any way not associated with the strictest integrity, will very soon find himself treated as the enemy of the people whom he betrays.

Great as will be the change under Fascism from the geographical to the occupational franchise, whereby electors will vote no longer for hack-politicians but for technicians who understand their special needs, there will be a still greater change in the status and spirit of popular representation.

The men who arrive at the top under this system will be in a very real sense the elect of the people, having themselves passed through the mill of industry and proved themselves in the eyes of colleagues not readily to be deceived. Their distinction, unlike the manufactured distinctions of to-day, will be anything but spurious.

They will be among the aristocrats of the new classless society which Fascism shall build—aristocrats by right of character and worth. Public

affairs, no longer a rampage, will be administered by them as a sacred trust, and they shall enjoy the support of the whole Blackshirt crusade in maintaining ceaseless watch and ward over what shall be the new-found integrity of national life—an integrity in the shaping of which Fascism is destined to find its supreme expression and make its most enduring mark upon the history of man.

4. Pagan Individualism.

No aspect of Fascist philosophy evokes more excited debate than the stress placed upon the paramount importance of the State as custodian of man's political and economic destiny.

We are not surprised that democrats should quarrel with us on this score, since they see in the State only an agent to keep the masses in order while individualism enjoys free scope and enterprise—a view representing as pretty a piece of camouflaged barbarism as even the most dishonest political moralist could desire.

Liberty in its highest form is for them the liberty of the more powerful individuals to capture the State machine and run it for their own benefit, without recognising any over-riding duty of the State to act on behalf of the general community.

What does astonish one, however, is that Social-Democrats should take their stand with the older parties in maintaining this conception, and exhibiting it as an ideal to be defended against Fascist "tyranny." The Social-Democrats are understood to advocate possession by the State of the nation's entire sources

of livelihood—yet they profess to deny to the State supremacy over its component parts ! In the simple-minded so strange an attitude spells muddled thinking. In those who are anything but simple-minded it spells a word more sinister.

Fascists reject the principle of the State-ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, but if we accepted that principle our argument for the supremacy of the State above every conflicting individual or sectional interest would have even stronger force, since without it the Socialist fiasco would be inconceivably more catastrophic than the present-day fiasco of Economic Liberalism. In other words, if we were Socialists we should find ourselves, as men of intellectual honesty, in the Communist camp.

The reason why we are not to be found in that camp, apart from our passionate faith in the star of our nationhood, is that we believe private enterprise to be much more efficient than public enterprise, providing that it is made to work within the confines of a planned economy for the benefit of the people as distinct from their exploitation. While we encourage private enterprise, our task is not to keep the masses in order while individualism holds high revelry, but to keep *individualism* in order so that the *masses* may enjoy what they have never had before—economic freedom to call their souls their own.

Since the Industrial Revolution private enterprise has ruled governments : the day is now at hand for governments to avert disaster by ruling private enterprise.

The man who really believes that such an achieve-

ment is possible without giving to Government the fullest power to act, and to protect its actions against the terrific might of vested interests, may gain much credit by virtue of his beautiful sentiments, but he is, nevertheless, a fool.

Nothing could be more futile to argue, as almost every critic of Fascism does argue, that in so far as the State exists for the individual, and not the individual for the State, the stress should not be placed upon the State but upon the individual. The premise is correct ; the conclusion mere moonshine.

It is true that the State exists, or should exist, for the individual, but by this one means all the individuals, and what is the corporate life of all the individuals but the life of the State itself? On that account it is clear that realists who insist upon the individual's claims as against those of the State are advancing the cause of persons whose activities conflict with the general interest and are therefore anti-social, warranting no favouritist legislation but outlawry.

In Fascist Britain they will receive their due.

We shall require of every citizen that his methods coincide with national aims. Otherwise there can be no solution of our troubles. The mystical truth of the paradox that in order to have life a man must first lose it is destined to play a very large and practical part in the Fascist ordering of affairs. That he may enjoy liberty the citizen of the future must lose it to the State.

One of our many discoveries during the war was that in battalions where the discipline was firmest the men were happiest and their morale most sure.

There is solid enjoyment in forming part of a community wherein every individual knows his job and does it to the best of his ability ; ultimately it is doubtful whether there is any other real social happiness.

Similarly it is wretched to work in an atmosphere where everybody is trying to scamp his duty or so to order affairs that he scores off his colleagues instead of collaborating with them. Human beings refusing to submit to a communal purpose higher than their own selfish purpose produce nothing beyond egoism, treachery and greed.

These are the unlovely qualities which defenders of the old democratic philosophy wish to safeguard. When they plead for support in their fight against Fascism they use many high-sounding words, but what they are demanding in reality is the continuance of a commercial civilisation, in essence, pitiless and pagan, which enables them to grow rich upon the misery and insecurity of the great masses of their fellow-countrymen.

Rhetoric avails no longer to conceal this reality, which Fascism is mobilising to smash.

The State must be paramount. That is our relentless determination, not because we think too little of the individuals who compose the State, but because we think too much.

5. Fascist Freedom.

The definition has been attempted of the boundaries beyond which liberty shall hold no sovereign sway in the Fascist state ; the line of demarcation

being always the spiritual and material welfare of our people.

In the barren lands which lie on the wrong side of the line is likely to be found a remarkable assortment of individuals, all of them spiritually incapable of assimilating the ideal of the corporate life.

That verray parfit Marxian knight, Vanoc II, with other top-heavy and humourless pedants, will doubtless spend his days exchanging reminiscences with James Douglas ; Beaverbrook and sad little Joad will make queer bed-fellows ; only their common futility will explain the comradeship of Allen of Hurtwood and Elias of Odhams ; while the general population of this appalling desert will consist of all the aliens who supply the films with their slop and slush, all the nit-wits who serve a debased Press, all the architects and jerry-builders who have turned the fair face of England into a red rash of measles ; the entire pageant of people who have had great opportunities and betrayed them for egotism or for gold.

It is argued against us that in our arbitrary way we shall rob mankind of the services, here and there, of a great man. That is not our intention. Mankind is a large institution and if any man has great services to offer for its advancement he shall be tested by his willingness to apply his gifts to the task of enriching the life of that part of mankind which shares with him his nationhood. If charity begins at home, how much more so does necessity ?

So far from being ranged against genius, Fascism demands that genius shall come down to earth and range itself on the side of those who work for the

common interests of all, mobilised so that it can help to give immediate direction to affairs.

Thus the Bernard Shaw of the future will be neither suppressed, nor ignored, nor treated as a buffoon; he will be used, his immense faculty for social criticism meeting with speedy recognition and contributing not only to the benefit of posterity, but to the solution of the practical problems of his own day.

If our civilisation is to be built up by deliberate effort and conscious planning; if our national life is to explore every possibility of splendid wayfaring, then we can afford no longer to spurn the co-operation of our great men. But on the other hand, the great men will be charged with the responsibility to see that their powers are used for the advancement of the corporate life of the nation and not as explosives for blasting it to bits.

Our opponents cry out against us that we are intolerant of criticism. That is untrue. The flexibility of the Corporate State is devised for the purpose of making the maximum use of criticism, since it is only by such means that the dynamic urge of a nation towards great achievement can be maintained. Fascism's one stern condition is that the critic should know his job and pursue disinterestedly the ideal of the common good.

We are intolerant of the criticism of the amateur and the fool, because wherever such criticism is heard the chances are that the knave, the eternal "racketeer" is standing close behind the curtain, full of glib whispers, using the critic as a tool, wherewith to create division and strife, so that he may plunder outside the confines of a planned economy, among the ruins of Empire.

Such criticism we shall either destroy or divert into channels less socially dangerous, and here again the admirable contrivances of the Corporate State come to our aid. Fascism, deriding the lunatic notion of Democracy that your farm labourer is competent to pass an opinion about, let us say, the final snags of marine insurance, does insist that he is at least competent to pass an opinion about farm labouring; and therefore provides him with a scientific system whereby that opinion can find expression, no matter how mild or how devastating it may be. In this way even the most insignificant individual will be able to contribute to the planning of the State.

So infinitely complex is the organisation of the modern State that the menace of the amateur and the hack must be brought decisively to an end. Their place must be taken by the expert, not because the fashioning of a technician is the final objective of the creative force, but because the human experiment is doomed unless it can make secure the first objective, which is the establishment of a satisfactory basis for the provision of the material needs of life. Until this be done the spirit of man lies in bondage to every kind of wretchedness and folly, from which it will be rescued only when every citizen turns technician in order to master his own particular job and correlate it to the work of the rest of the community. Unity to-day is not only strength, but the sheet-anchor of survival.

If we appear to destroy liberty, it should be remembered that the particular liberty we destroy is that which is destroying the race.

In place of it we offer to all men and women of goodwill the right to work with valour, not merely to

keep the wolf from their own doors, but even more to build in Britain a corporate life that will finally triumph over the difficulties of the material world and set free the human personality for all the adventures that the spirit of man has still to undertake.

6. The Blackshirt Life.

It shall be said of the Fascist revolutionary that before transforming society he transformed his own life.

The miser may preach philanthropy and get away with it ; the lecher may slink through the dark and yet wear the halo of his chapel or his church.

But your Social Democrat cannot make Fascism. Humbug commands all entrances but this.

Fascism tolerates no whining about "rights." The highest privilege it grants is the renunciation of "rights." All but the right to serve, to suffer, to sacrifice.

"Indeed ! " says the Social-Democrat, and is seen no more. We are as dry-eyed at his going as we shall be steel-eyed in the easier days when he begs leave to return.

Those who serve Fascism as revolutionaries must lay aside creature-comforts and security. That is the least of the demands made upon them. Night after night shall they go forth to speak, or to protect those who speak from the argument of broken bottles. Week after week shall they surrender themselves to routine long after the novelty has worn thin.

And much more shall they do before the hard-fought day is won.

Life offers to men many pleasant diversions, many opportunities of escape from the harshness of fact, many subtle shades of experience, many bright colours. All of them for the present the Fascist rejects, not because he is colour blind ; not because he has a one-track mind, but because there is a revolution to be made. The foundations of life are threatened, and civilisation in its crisis calls for decisions in black and white.

There must be no posturings, no dawdling by the wayside.

In these hard days of the battle for survival there is more to be solved than cross-word puzzles. Pleasant fancies, day-dreams, little oddities of knowledge, all the things which grace the *Observer* pages—these are the tunes of those who fiddle while the soul of man burns at the stake.

Poor fiddlers ! They cannot see the conflagration, so enthralled are they by the music that they make. Flaneurs as effective as butterflies in a gale !

Fascist revolutionaries pick no flowers in these pretty fields. There is a job to be done that transcends cross-word puzzles and letters to the *Observer*—a job that will not mark time while darts are thrown or philosophic hairs meticulously split ; a job that dances no attendance upon art-criticism or table-tennis, and is independent of the results of the “three-thirty” or the panting of hounds in the wake of an electric hare.

These things no doubt are good things ; we adopt no “moral attitude” towards them. But we know the force of the gale that blows, and we have no time to spare, no surplus energy. Straight through the

frills and furbelows of the times do we cut our path, and still our major sacrifice is not made.

Wit shot with malice is enjoyed by men. It is pleasant to see the wind taken out of the sails of our colleagues ; enjoyable to see them riddled by the rapiers of satire. They may be our friends, but the ego is appeased not less on that account—our puny ego which seeks to loom immense above the diminished stature of the good fellows who are ranged upon one side.

Here we approach our major sacrifice. We have learnt to scorn these pleasures, to applaud the better phrase, the clearer argument ; to seek out the brilliance and the valour of our comrades to resist the temptations to exalt ourselves at their expense.

The pampered ego is clamorous for recognition, and quite unscrupulous. It is satisfied with its own appearances, careless of the facts which those appearances hide. Left to itself it revels every hour in a riot of self-exhibition.

And victory shall come to us because by ruthless discipline, we have resisted these pernicious pleasures and surrendered our ego utterly to the cause we serve.

That is the measure of sacrifice we are proud to make.

7. The Leadership Principle.

Even in these putrescent days of democracy's life-in-death, an emergency still has power to place the able man in charge.

When a ship founders, or a building is ablaze, or panic overtakes a body of troops in action, the duly

constituted authority acts peremptorily and finds himself obeyed.

Or if the authority be incompetent to deal with the crisis, then a natural leader almost always arises in his default to take command.

The skipper whose ship is sinking does not wireless Whitehall for instructions. The chief of a fire brigade does not demand a Royal Commission to decide which windows of a blazing building shall first be smashed. The subaltern in charge of badly shaken troops does not telephone for advice to the War Cabinet.

And if the subaltern and his "non-coms." are shot down it will be a poor platoon that cannot produce an able private to take charge.

Even in that most important department of Imperial life known as "sport," the principle of leadership is still retained, at any rate, in so far as the captain in the field is enabled to change the bowling without calling the selection committee together or getting in touch with the secretary for the Dominions. Recent tendencies show that this principle is weakening, and that one day we may see Mr. J. H. Thomas, in the cause of Imperial unity, vigorously tick-tacking from the grandstand instructions to the captain as to what form of bowling our Dominion visitors are likely to appreciate the most.

At present, however, the captain is free to get on with the game, without interference during the actual progress of the match.

Only in the management of the nation's political and economic life is the principle of leadership ignored, for the good (or bad) reason that demo-

cratic government endeavouring to govern in the interests of the whole would step so severely on the corns of the particular section of the whole which gave them power, that the resultant outcry would see them driven helter-skelter from office. Thus governments of this order stand for the negation of leadership, and are condemned always to follow abjectly at their master's feet.

Equally miserable is the plight of the ordinary Parliamentarian who on the one hand dares not disobey his Party Whips, and on the other is scared stiff of saying or doing the slightest thing which might alienate any group of supporters in his constituency, no matter how small the group or how strong his conviction—should he ever possess a conviction, which is rare.

No wonder that the fake "leaders" who arise in such circumstances are those best versed in the arts of compromise, camouflage, and all the multitudinous devices of low cunning.

The one fortunate piece of revelation provided by our obsolete Parliamentary system is that the people of Britain show, at election time, a very deep and earnest desire for leadership, no matter how woefully perverted the expression of it may be. For a few brief weeks the candidate is cheered and acclaimed almost as a superman—the roof and crown of popular desire. He may be, and frequently is, a plausible and self-seeking rascal, but that does not prevent his sublimation by the electorate into the embodiment and supreme objective of their hopes.

This shows very clearly that, when the mask is torn from the eyes of Britons so that they see how a sham

leadership has utterly abused their trust, they will be aroused to stupendous heights of enthusiasm, and inspired to great endeavour by the advent of a real leader who has the courage, the ability, and the vision to cut a path for them through the tangled growths of corruption and decay which at present hem them in and isolate them from the decency and grandeur of life.

If there is to be discerned in the Blackshirts an immeasurable confidence, it is because we know that such a leader has already come among us ; because we have looked for him in the eye and fear no more for the future of our race.

8. The Lights of London.

Here is the heart of the Empire's capital : a spectacle of fire. Fire which runs and leaps and turns twinkling somersaults—providing the illuminations of the greatest of all the cities of the world.

Not a raging, capricious fire that serves no human purpose, but a fire schooled by modern magicians to spell out messages to the Imperial peoples who go their ways in the brilliance of the London night.

Well might your Martian visitor find his astonishment at the spectacle swallowed by a feverish desire to know what mighty tidings are being flashed into the eyes and minds of men. The solution to the riddle of the universe would certainly be his first conjecture, for what lesser message could warrant the employment of letters of flame which once blazoned forth Heaven's laws for the governance of earth ?

Pitiful conjecture, falling far short of the resplendent truth ! There shall not be shortage of scornful tutors to put the Martian right. He is to be told that mankind has risen above all cosmic mysteries ; that its aspirations, and fears, and achievements have been caught up and trained upon a still more transcendental objective—the commercial civilisation *de luxe* in which men are destined to become even more in tune with the infinite as their profits accumulate, and their redundant souls decay.

The custodians of the modern world, faithful to their trust, will not allow mankind to be sold for a mere abstraction, or to waste its precious time upon foolish thoughts of good and ill. They serve a reality, and serve it with unfaltering faithfulness until they die—the reality of dividends.

Man has been defined as a thinking animal, a praying animal, an implement-using animal, as every kind of animal under the sun, but these definitions have obscured the one dazzling truth—that man is a buying animal.

It is to the credit of our contemporary civilisation, not only that this truth has been remembered, but that it has been burnt into the memory of our times by all the flaming messages of fire which gallop post-haste and as proud as cavalry to the eye from every vantage point in the city.

Only a simpleton would have the human intelligence to beat the desert air by enquiring into the barren mysteries of eternity. Does he not know that there is truly majestic knowledge to be gained in the here and now ? As an instance, does he not know that “Brown’s is the Stout—To Shout—About !”

The priest of old called upon the faithful to pray. The enlightened priests of to-day—the splendid hierarchy of those who sell—call with a louder voice upon the faithful, demanding that they should buy. And the ancient ritual of flame is again invoked, now to utter the larger truth that “Brown’s is the Stout—To Shout—About ! ”

And, no doubt, in course of time, the Imperial peoples will take up the mystic chant, pouring forth their sacrifices at the feet of Mr. Brown. Meanwhile, they walk the streets impressed by the whirling pageantry of fire, feeling that in some way, they too, are initiates of the great commercial mysteries.

If many of them are conscious of their small purchasing power, which makes their sacrifices to the priests so unworthy, they do not lack for compensation. Arcadia remains for their visiting. Some migrate for the evening from the modified rusticity of Camberwell Green to the wide open spaces of Hyde Park, where the summons of the lights may be forgotten as they hold their partner’s hands and allow the lilt of American love-croons to command a brief space of their lives : their sentimental simulacrum of sex, policed and kept respectable by the unceasing vigilance of the law.

Others escape the blaze of the streets by paying for admission to temples where the lights are sympathetic and suffused, and where the potential he-men among them may gallop by proxy upon the backs of magnificent stallions to the rescue of prairie maidens in distress, while the potential she-women, in fancy, swoon beneath the brave beards of desert sheiks, mercifully divorced from their desert smells.

Yet to the sensitive of nostril there will be another smell, even less to the nose's pleasure.

And next morning, before the Imperial peoples set forth to work for their priests (for they must work as well as buy), the penny paper arrives with further supplies of narcotic, in the shape of the world's sensations assiduously garnered by telephone and wireless, flanked by the announcements of the indefatigable priests whose cosmic destiny it is to sell, sell, sell.

And at night—again the blaze of sacred fires leaping upon the walls of the city.

This is the freedom of the people. Freed from their landscape, and their soil, from their tradition and their heritage, from personality and from life. And in return for this freedom, they serve as slaves the high priests of commerce and of usury whose fathers did not fight at Agincourt.

For a time only. They are not as yet dead. They can still comprehend a fire that refuses to blazon upon the wall the flaming message that "Brown's is the Stout—To Shout—About!" It is a fire that glows within them and which one day shall leap insurgent to its revenge—the fire that is the soul of Britain.

Before the day dawns, the priests who befoul the spectacle of our life should have their portmanteaux packed and waiting in the hall. . . .

9. To the Warrior Dead of the Empire.

You will remember, when the troopship plunged upon its way across the Channel and the evening winds played a game of rough-and-tumble with your

hair, how you gazed straight ahead, fearless-eyed, not only upon the adventure destined to engulf you, but upon a time when the lives of men should be as heroic as their deaths.

Standing there on the deck, the inexorable doom of battle brought nearer with every breath, you saw before you the vision of a future that held no place for the sordid futilities of the past—a future sanctified by the blood-caked agony of the fields of France and dedicated for all time to the noblest aspirations of your race.

Looking back upon the wreckage of the years we contemplate, not alone the organised betrayal of your cause, but the hideous, calculated cynicism by means of which it is encompassed. To your memory they raised the Cenotaph, but the FUTURE of your vision they did not build. Your sacrifice—a paltry million lives—was not spectacular enough to ensure that your spirit's splendour should be caught up and enshrined in the life of the nation which you saved.

Such a course would have involved sacrifice on the part of the masters of the situation, the Political Pundits and the Lords of Business, and you would be lacking in respect to men of such high consequence if you were to expect from them even the smallest surrender of their dues. You laid down your lives, it is true, but what was your purpose if not to ensure that there should still be profits, and that political power should continue sweet for those privileged to taste of its fruit?

Sleep on, brave comrades!

It is well that the last sounds to reverberate through your mortal consciousness were the thunder

of the barrage and the racket of the machine-guns, for therein was a nobler music than the jackal-cries of those who came to consolidate the Peace and to batten on its gains. It is well that you did not see the cohesive purpose fade, the comradeship dissolve, and the Yellow Streak, burgeoning in a coat of many gorgeous colours, arise to take command.

It is well, most assuredly it is well, that you did not watch your native land transformed as if by magic into a sort of monstrous *palais de danse*, with every species of commercial "ramp" finding a partner amidst every assortment of political "graft," and kicking gleeful heels in the air to celebrate the debasement and vulgarisation of life to levels upon which the lords and masters could not fail to feel at home.

What of us, your brothers-in-arms? Does no reproach rest upon us, that we should have stood by while every value that we prized was derisively flung away or else dangled in front of us by self-seekers and cynics who had no purpose beyond exploiting our allegiance for other ends than ours?

We can only say that we were young, and scattered, and pathetically trustful of leaders who made bright promises to us, and who under cover of those promises, served but one aim—at all costs to keep themselves in power. It was long before we discovered that in order to achieve this result there was no policy of compromise or surrender to which these leaders would refuse to stoop.

On the one hand we were offered a tawdry patriotism, a call not to build a finer, cleaner Britain, but to keep an ignoble Britain in a state of patchwork

repair, and to conserve all that was mean and grasping and economically wicked so that the wealth and privilege of the few might still survive. On the other hand they offered us a greasy internationalism, the class war, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and all the other distempers of the Socialist dream.

As these two alternatives drew together and arranged marriages of convenience we found ourselves still farther in the darkness, and for the most part became resigned to what seemed the inevitable defeat of our once virile and majestic race.

If the records ended here they would make but sorry reading. But they do not end here.

When our need was the most urgent, and our position the most hopeless, we were amazed to see emerging from a miscellany of "fake" leaders a leader who was not a fake. He was of our own war companionship, he saw as we saw, and felt as we felt, only with an intenser luminosity.

He called upon the crusade.

He called upon us to follow him in a drive against the largest and the most strongly entrenched social conspiracies the world has ever known. He called upon us to destroy the organised sham that masqueraded as our "national life." He called upon us to put aside our doubts, to relinquish our ease, and once again to take up the hard fight for Britain, this time to save her soul.

Inspired by his dauntless courage, animated by the power of his personality and impelled by the superb vigour of his mind, we hastened to respond, one by one, score by score, hundred by hundred, and then

thousand by thousand ; so that to-day the thunder of our march, side by side with the flower of the nation's youth, has sounded throughout the land.

In the strength of our creed we shall pass triumphantly through ridicule, abuse and violence to liberate the people of our nation from the shoddy tyrannies which oppress and corrupt them and to set before them an ideal of service to their country such as they have not known before.

We are the Fascists of Britain. We come upon the national scene as challengers of every factor that spells decay. We challenge the notion that men must of necessity live far below the level of their own transcendent achievement. We challenge profit-mongers and the promoters of class war, and bid them give way before our cause. We plan for a united nation, in which there shall be wealth and equity for all. There is no room for any other "plan," no place for any other "cause."

We carry with us, as a sacred possession, the memory of the spirit which flamed in you when you leapt upon death as an athlete upon the ball. If human endeavour avail, that flame shall serve as a beacon to irradiate the hearts of Britons through many years to come, and to shine forth across the seas as an assurance to her sons and daughters that the Mother Country, resurgent and vital, has again assumed the lead in the vanguard of the mighty nations of the world.